

Claims:

1. A system for displaying a user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

5       a gaming console for playing a video game;  
      a domestic visual display unit operatively connected to the gaming console for displaying the video game to the user; and  
      a portable digital data store configured for operation with the gaming console when operatively read by the same, the digital data store comprising the user's  
10      digitised photographic image data and a viewing application program, the viewing application program being arranged on operation to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit when the digital data store has been read by the gaming console.

15      2. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the domestic visual display unit comprises a television.

20      3. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the viewing application program is arranged to enable multiple images of the digitised photographic image data to be displayed to the user simultaneously and a gaming controller of the gaming console is arranged to enable the user to navigate though the multiple images.

25      4. A system according to Claim 3, wherein the multiple images are in the form of thumbnail images.

30      5. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the viewing application program comprises a plurality of user-selectable digital effects algorithms for altering the presentation of the user's digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit.

6. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the portable digital data store comprises a plurality of user-selectable viewing application programs, each program providing a different algorithm for displaying the user's digitised photographic image data in a different way on the domestic visual display unit.

7. A system according to Claim 6, wherein each program is arranged to provide a different photo enhancement of the user's digitised photographic image data.

5 8. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the gaming console comprises communication means for connecting the console to a wide area network, such as the Internet, and the viewing application program comprises a communications program operatively controlling the communications means for transmitting information to a remote party via the communications means and the wide area network.

10 9. A system according to Claim 8, wherein the communications program is arranged to transmit a user selection command and/or the user's digitised photographic image data to the remote party.

15 10. A system according to Claim 8, wherein the gaming console comprises means for receiving and digitising a user's voice into voice data and the communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to the remote party.

20 11. A system according to Claim 8, wherein the communications program is arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of data received via the communications means.

25 12. A system according to Claim 8, wherein the communications program comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the gaming console and the remote party.

30 13. A system according to Claim 12, wherein the applet is arranged to password protect access to part or all of the data to be transmitted by the communications means with the user inputting a password associated with the data to be transmitted.

14. A system according to Claim 12, wherein data received via the communications means is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all

of the received data once the user has input a correct password associated with the received data.

15. A system according to Claim 8, further comprising:

5 a further gaming console for playing a video game; the further gaming console including further communication means for connecting the further gaming console to the wide area network;

a further domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to the remote party when connected with the console; and

10 a further portable digital data store including the user's digitised photographic image data and a further viewing application program, the further viewing application program being arranged to configure the further gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the further domestic visual display unit when the further digital data store has been read by the further gaming console, and comprising  
15 a further communications program for receiving sharing information from the user via the further communications means and the wide area network.

16. A system according to Claim 15, wherein the sharing information comprises a pointer for display on the further domestic visual display.

20 17. A system according to Claim 15, wherein the sharing information comprises voice over IP data.

18. A system according to Claim 8, further comprising:

25 a further gaming console for playing a video game; the further gaming console including further communication means for operatively connecting the further gaming console to the wide area network;

a further domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to the remote party when connected with the console; and

30 a further portable digital data store including a further viewing application program, the further viewing application program comprising a further communications program for receiving the user's digitised photographic image data from the user via the further communications means and the wide area network, the further viewing application program being arranged to configure the further gaming

console to display the digitised photographic image data on the further domestic visual display unit when the user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the further gaming console.

19. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the further gaming console comprises means for receiving and digitising the third party's voice into voice data and the further communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to the user.

20. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the further communications program is arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of data received via the further communications means.

21. A system according to Claim 18, wherein the further communications program comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the further gaming console of the remote party and the gaming console of the user.

22. A system according to Claim 21, wherein received data is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all of the received data once the remote party has input a correct password associated with the received data.

23. A system according to Claim 21, further comprising a permanent data store connected to the wide area network, the permanent data store storing a copy of the user's digitised photographic image data and comprising transmission means for transmitting part or all of the user's digitised photographic image data to the remote party on receipt of a request generated by the user.

24. A system for displaying a user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

- a gaming console for playing a video game;
- a domestic visual display unit operatively connected to the gaming console for displaying the video game to the user; and
- a portable digital data store configured for operation with the gaming console when operatively read by the same, the digital data store comprising the user's

digitised photographic image data and a plurality of user-selectable viewing application programs, the viewing application programs providing different algorithms for displaying the user's digitised photographic image data in different ways and being arranged to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit in a user-selected way when the digital data store has been read by the gaming console.

25. A system according to Claim 24, wherein each program is arranged to provide a different photo enhancement of the user's digitised photographic image data.

26. A system for displaying a user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

a gaming console for playing a video game, the gaming console comprising a data communications module for connecting the console to a wide area network, such as the Internet;

a domestic visual display unit operatively connected to the gaming console for displaying the video game to the user; and

a portable digital data store configured for operation with the gaming console when operatively read by the same, the digital data store comprising the user's digitised photographic image data and a viewing application program, the viewing application program comprising a communications program for transmitting information to a remote party via the data communications module and the wide area network, and being arranged on operation to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit when the digital data store has been read by the gaming console.

27. A system according to Claim 26, wherein the communications program is arranged to transmit a user selection command and/or the user's digitised photographic image data to the remote party.

28. A system according to Claim 26, wherein the gaming console comprises a digitiser for receiving and digitising a user's voice into voice data and the communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to the remote party.

29. A system according to Claim 26, wherein the communications program is arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of data received via the data communications module.

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30. A system according to Claim 26, wherein the communications program comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the gaming console and the remote party.

10 31. A system according to Claim 30, wherein the applet is arranged to password protect access to part or all of the data to be transmitted via the data communications module with the user inputting a password associated with the data to be transmitted.

15 32. A system according to Claim 30, wherein data received via the data communications module is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all of the received data once the user has input a correct password associated with the received data.

20 33. A system for displaying a first user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

a gaming console for playing a video game for the first user, the gaming console comprising a data communications module for connecting the gaming console to a wide area network, such as the Internet;

25 a domestic visual display unit operatively connected to the gaming console for displaying the video game to the first user;

30 a portable digital data store configured for operation with the gaming console when operatively read by the same, the digital data store comprising the first user's digitised photographic image data and a viewing application program, the viewing application program comprising a communications program for transmitting information to a remote second user via the data communications module and the wide area network, and being arranged on operation to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit when the digital data store has been read by the gaming console;

a further gaming console for playing a further video game for the second user, the further gaming console including a further data communications module operatively connecting the further gaming console to the wide area network;

a further domestic visual display unit operatively connected to the further gaming console for displaying the further video game to the second user; and

a further portable digital data store configured for operation with the further gaming console when operatively read by the same, the further digital data store comprising the first user's digitised photographic image data and a further viewing application program, the further viewing application program being arranged on operation to configure the further gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the further domestic visual display unit when the further digital data store has been read by the further gaming console, and comprising a further communications program arranged to receive sharing information from the remote first user via the further data communications module and the wide area network.

34. A system according to Claim 33, wherein the sharing information comprises a pointer for display on the further domestic visual display.

35. A system according to Claim 33, wherein the sharing information comprises voice over IP data.

36. A system for displaying a first user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

a gaming console for playing a video game for the first user, the gaming console comprising a data communications module for connecting the console to a wide area network, such as the Internet;

a domestic visual display unit operatively connected to the gaming console for displaying the video game to the first user;

a portable digital data store configured for operation with the gaming console when operatively read by the same, the digital data store comprising the first user's digitised photographic image data and a viewing application program, the viewing application program comprising a communications program for transmitting information to a remote second user via the data communications module and the

wide area network, and being arranged on operation to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit when the digital data store has been read by the gaming console;

a further gaming console for playing a video game to the second user; the  
5 further gaming console including a further data communications module for connecting the further gaming console to the wide area network;

a further domestic visual display unit connected to the further gaming console for displaying a video game to the second user; and

a further portable digital data store including a further viewing application  
10 program, the further viewing application program comprising a further communications program for receiving the digitised photographic image data from the remote first user via the further data communications module and the wide area network, the further viewing application program being arranged on operation to configure the further gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data  
15 on the further domestic visual display unit when the first user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the further gaming console.

37. A system according to Claim 36, wherein the further gaming console comprises means for receiving and digitising the second user's voice into voice data and the  
20 further communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to the remote first user.

38. A system according to Claim 36, wherein the further communications program is arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of  
25 data received via the further data communications module.

39. A system according to Claim 36, wherein the further communications program comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the further gaming console and the first user.

40. A system according to Claim 36, wherein received data is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all of the received data once the second user has input a correct password associated with the received data.

41. A system according to Claim 36, further comprising a permanent data store connected to the wide area network, the permanent data store storing a copy of the first user's digitised photographic image data and comprising transmission means for transmitting part or all of the first user's digitised photographic image data to the second user on receipt of a request generated by the first user.

42. A method of viewing a user's photographic image data, the method comprising the steps of :

(a) digitising the user's photographic image data;

(b) selecting a viewing application program for viewing the user's digitised photographic image data;

(c) recording the user's digitised photographic image data and the selected viewing application program onto a portable digital data store having a format suitable for use in a video gaming console;

(d) running the selected viewing application program on a video gaming console by reading the portable digital data store; and

(e) displaying the user's digitised photographic image data using the selected viewing application program on a domestic visual display unit connected to the video gaming console.